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OLC #78-2847
1 August 1978

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Operations

FROM: Frederick P. Hitz
Legislative Counsel

SUBJECT: Briefing of House International Relations
Committee on 7 June Presidential Finding

25X1 1. [] You are scheduled to brief the House International
Relations Committee (HIRC) on 2 August at 0930 hours on the
25X1 [] Presidential Finding on covert action. Because of traffic
at that early hour, you should plan to leave at 0830 hours. This
office will arrange transportation. The room number for the
briefing is uncertain at this time but it will be either
H-236 of the Capitol, which is a rather small room, or 2172
Rayburn House Office Building, which is a very large room.
Hopefully, it will be H-236, which is more isolated. Attached
is a witness list and a list of members of the Subcommittee
being briefed, together with biographic background on the members.

25X1 2. [] Prior to the 95th Congress, covert action briefings
given the HIRC were limited to the Subcommittee on Oversight,
Chaired by the then full Committee Chairman, Representative
Doc Morgan. Mr. Morgan ruled the Committee with an iron hand
and was able to limit covert action briefings to members of the
Subcommittee only. In spite of this, numerous leaks occurred
as a result of covert action briefings of that Subcommittee.
When Mr. Morgan retired, Representative Clement J. Zablocki (D., Wis.)
took over as Chairman of the full Committee. However, considerable
pressure was brought on Mr. Zablocki to allow all members of the
Committee to attend covert action briefings. Mr. Zablocki resisted
somewhat such pressure and was helped by the fact that, prior to
the current finding, there were only two covert action findings
signed. Jack Brady, Chief of Staff, has worked with us to keep
the number of members privy to such briefings to a minimum. The
last covert action briefing was scheduled at a time and place and
pursuant to a notice to all Committee members designed to limit
attendance. As a result, only Chairman Zablocki and Chief of Staff
Brady were present at the briefing.

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3. ☐ The briefing scheduled for 2 August will be handled somewhat in the same fashion. A notice has gone out to all of the full Committee members that the Subcommittee on International Security and Scientific Affairs, Chaired by Representative Zablocki, will be briefed on matters of interest to the Subcommittee by you at the above-mentioned time and place. However, since the previous briefing, Representatives Gerry E. Studds (D., Mass.) and Steven J. Solarz (D., N.Y.) have become aware of the briefing and more than likely will attend. Studds is a member of the Subcommittee. Solarz is not. We have not been able to determine what other members of the full Committee might be knowledgeable on the matter and, therefore, will attend. Jack Brady will be the only staff member in attendance.

25X1

4. ☐ I believe you should stress in your presentation the sensitive nature of covert action programs and the fact that such programs might have to be cancelled if information on such programs becomes public.* Since a transcript will be made of the briefing, you should request permission from the Chairman to go off the record when discussing details of the various programs. In the past, the procedure has been to read the Presidential Finding in its entirety into the record and then go off the record for any discussion of supporting detail and questions raised by members. Because of the complex nature of the Finding, it might be difficult to follow that procedure in this case. Therefore, we should also request permission from the Chairman to work with Jack Brady to eliminate any sensitive details from the transcript once it is prepared.

25X1

5. ☐ Because we are unable to determine which members might attend the briefing, it is impossible to foresee what problem areas or questions might arise. If you wish, ☐ can meet with you later in the day to discuss the briefing further.

25X1

☐

Frederick P. Hitz

Attachments
As Stated

25X1

cc: ☐

* But more importantly, description of relationships, involving foreign governments and for this a valid source or method protecting the information is of a sensitive classification.

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Briefing of
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS
of the
HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Wednesday - 2 August 1978

9:30 a.m.

H-236, The Capitol

(7 June Presidential Finding)

Clement J. Zablocki (D., Wis.), Chairman

L. H. Fountain (D., N. Car.)	William S. Broomfield (R., Mich.)
Jonathan B. Bingham (D., N.Y.)	Larry Winn (R., Kan.)
Gerry E. Studds (D., Mass.)	
Anthony C. Beilenson (D., Calif.)	

Staff Member

Jack Brady, Chief of Staff

WITNESS LIST

John N. McMahon

Deputy Director for Operations

Accompanied by:

25X1

[Redacted]

Chief, International Activities
Division, Covert Action Staff,
Directorate of Operations

Frederick P. Hitz

Legislative Counsel, Office of
the Director of Central Intelligence

25X1

[Redacted]

Associate Legislative Counsel,
Office of the Director of Central
Intelligence